NEWSLETTER—Fall/Winter 1982

INTERSPECIES COMMUNICATION

Contact

Welcome to the Interspecies Communication—the concept as well as the organization. The concept itself is very old; the so-called "primitives" have been communicating with animals since before the dawn of recorded history. Our work of contacting various species of animals should be thought of as an update, fit for the times we live in.

The organization has been slowly growing and transforming over the past five years. We are just now emerging as an organization truly able to develop an active membership. In return for your support we shall keep you informed about the latest events, breakthroughs, expeditions, and even of our metaphysical realizations when they are capable of being translated into words and newsletter form. Interspecies Communication should be considered a focus for a developing world network of involved coworkers, scientists, artists, musicians and media people. We hope that you will become interested enough to join this expanding group. There is so much to be accomplished.

Our major project of the moment revolves around a continuing communication relationship with the wild orcas of British Columbia. This summer, we mounted two expeditions to the orcas' home. Utilizing state-of-the-art transmitting, recording, and analysis equipment, we moved that much closer to understanding the unlimited venue of human/orca relations. Sometimes, the level of these interactions became absolutely breath taking. Working entirely from kayaks, in the two A.M. quiet of the inland water wilderness off Vancouver Island, we discovered a pod of orcas willing to play acoustic games with our guitar music. In one instance, a single orca invented what we call a 3-2-1-0 sequence with guitar player Jim Nollman, expanding the dialogues into the realm of arithmetic. Over a two hour period, we exchanged sounds with the orcas three distinct times. After twenty minutes, the orcas left, only to return a few minutes later with more whales. They stayed to vocalize for another twenty minutes, disappeared once more, and then finally returned again with still more whales. We were finally forced to paddle ashore due to the advent of thick fog.

A recent collaboration with the Institute of Applied Physiology and Medicine in Seattle has given us access to a device that images sound onto a video screen. Using this device, known as a color sonagram, we have isolated several instances where a single orca has exhibited the ability to transmit two voices simultaneously. One voice seems harmonically and rhythmically in sync with the notes of the electric guitar. This we call a human/orca dialogue. The second voice, often the fourth overtone, demonstrates no recognizable relation to the guitar tone. However, there are other orcas calling out to the communicating orca, but from a distance. We speculate that the second voice is the communicating orca communicate directly to the other orcas. Time will give us a better handle on the truth of the matter.

The kayak used in our work is quite a unique piece of equipment. Donated to I.C. by Eddyline Kayak Company of Mukilteo Washington; the fiberglass boat has been outfitted with a built-in guitar case, a tape recorder, complete amplication system, and underwater reception system. Lastly, we have constructed a small control panel in the cockpit which allows two or more people to listen in to the underwater human/whale dialogues through headphone monitors. We use kayaks because that make no noise while moving through the water..

Our new guitar, the Peavey T-Jr. looks as if a normal sized electric guitar had given birth. Previous trips had made it only too clear that a standard electric was too large to maneuver inside a kayak. Likewise, they were too low-pitched to reach the high notes vocalized by some of the whales. The new guitar is tuned an octave above a standard guitar—a contribution from the Peavey Company. By next summer we hope to join our new sound to some unique voice modulation gear that will allow us to phase our own notes into two voices at once.

Interspecies Communication acoustic engineer Richard Ferraro has theorized that when we begin to delay the echo-location clicks sent out by the whales, we shall, in effect, be creating a kind of acoustic "hallucination". Orcas normally "see" by the way the sound echos off an object. Now, that echo will possess an echo of its own. We have already learned, through much direct experience, that if we keep our own sound transmissions playful and inventive, the whales respond with a similar imaginative enthusiasm. We believe that the orcas will respond to this echo delay by inventing a sound/image game which will do us one better; thus expanding the acoustic relationship into previously unchartered dimensions. Whether or not we will ever be able to actually "talk" to the orcas some day, using mutually understood "words" is still over the horizon. However, we are well on the way to establishing a complex musical rapport. Likewise, we have firmly established a call/silence/respond/silence/call format which can be considered a true dialogue in form. We haved played and invented acoustic games with the orcas for hours on end. Sometimes it sounds like interspecies jazz. Other times it goes so far as to muddle up our preconceptions of the orca as an "animal". Most importantly, every session still ends with the startling realization that the whales are every bit as interested in pursuing the dialogue form as we are. But why is it that so many of the limitations to expand communication develop from the human end?

Let us not give the impression that I.C. has become totally reliant upon high-tech answers to solve basic communication skills. Bottlenose dolphins are very different than orcas. They vocalize mostly in the ultrasonic range where we humans can not even hear. On the other hand they are much more acrobatic and tactile than the usually physically aloof orcas. Moreso, they often live in areas where it is possible for a human to get right into the water with them, as opposed to the very chilly waters of the Pacific Northwest. I.C., in collaboration with the Human/Dolphin Foundation of Malibu, California, is about to commence a six month experiment off the subtropical west coast of Mexico. There, we shall attempt to attract the wild dolphin pods into a protected cove, as a first step in establishing a long-term human/dolphin community (please see diagram). In keeping with our philosophy of working only with wild animals (so they may always have the option to leave when we begin to bore them!); we shall not use any kind of food reward nor employ any fences or barriers to impede free movement in and out of the cove. Our main instruments for this project are mostly acoustic and include the potent Dolphin Sticks, used by Australian Aborigines for many centuries for calling dolphins. Once we have caught the fancy of the dolphins, we begin a patient process of keeping their attention by using in-the-water touch and voice contact. Children are a key element of this developing community. Dolphins trust children more than they do human adults.

Eventually, John Lilly and his crew will take over from us and begin to institute an element of language into the growing relationship. Most intriguing is Doctor Lilly's plan of using an isolation tank as a means to tap directly into the enigmatic telepathic link between humans and dolphins.

People are always writing us, asking how they too might get involved in the work of I.C. in a more direct way. Everyone wants to be out on the water talking to whales! We are always searching for creative people able to design and build sophisticated electronic hardware. Likewise, we seek artists and scholars with imaginative linguistic and musical skills; able and willing to devise and implement new techniques for human/animal communication. We need people who are able to translate or notate our recordings so that others might study the dialogues for themselves. We seek people with media and promotional skills.

We seek a continuous and continuing sponsorship. We need a creative fundraiser. And we need you as a supporting member. *—Jim Nollman*

President's Note:

There has been a good deal of media coverage, these last months, in the Pacific Northwest regarding the capture of two killer whales for Sealand Acquarium in Victoria. The Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans issued a permit for the captures last summer and Sealand set up nets in Pedder Bay, B.C. Volunteers from Greenpeace and Orca Survey (a Washington state based research group) successfully steered the killer whales from the area and no captures took place.

Sealand's objective was to take two killer whales from the wild and to release their captive whale of 14 years, Haida, in exchange. The plan was that every few years tamed whales would be let go and replaced by others. This theory was supported by a number of environmentalists and as an experiment it might have proven to be of valid interest. However, several things occured. One, Haida died, and two, no whales were captured before the permit expired. The entire issued appears to be a simple one and yet the logistics are quite complex. Several problems and questions arise. Ample research has been completed already with captive cetaceans, why capture more; and with what intention? Studies prove whales and dolphins to be sensitive, emotional and intelligent. Why cause them undue suffering physically and emotionally by removing them from natural circumstances to isolation? The orcas to be taken would be from Canadian/American waters where some three hundred individuals live in documented family groups or pods. Orca Survey (Friday Harbor, Washington) has a network of volunteers recording information on J, K, and L pods, who regularly feed in the San Juan area. This is ongoing research in the wild and has gained substantial scientific data over the years. Needless to say, they are protective of their whales!

Individuals in the State of Washington ranging from politicians, scientists and those generally concerned have protested Sealand's decision to apply for another permit. The Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans board will meet sometime this

winter to decide and without responsible pressure will more than likely vote in Sealand's favor.

Below are names of those that might be able, with understanding, to deter the final outcome.

Interspecies Communication welcomes your active participation in this matter and is grateful to those of you that choose to write letters of reponsible protest. It is a small circumstance in a world where it seems often the wrongs outdo the rights. Thank you for your concern. *—Sandra Fuller Wilson*

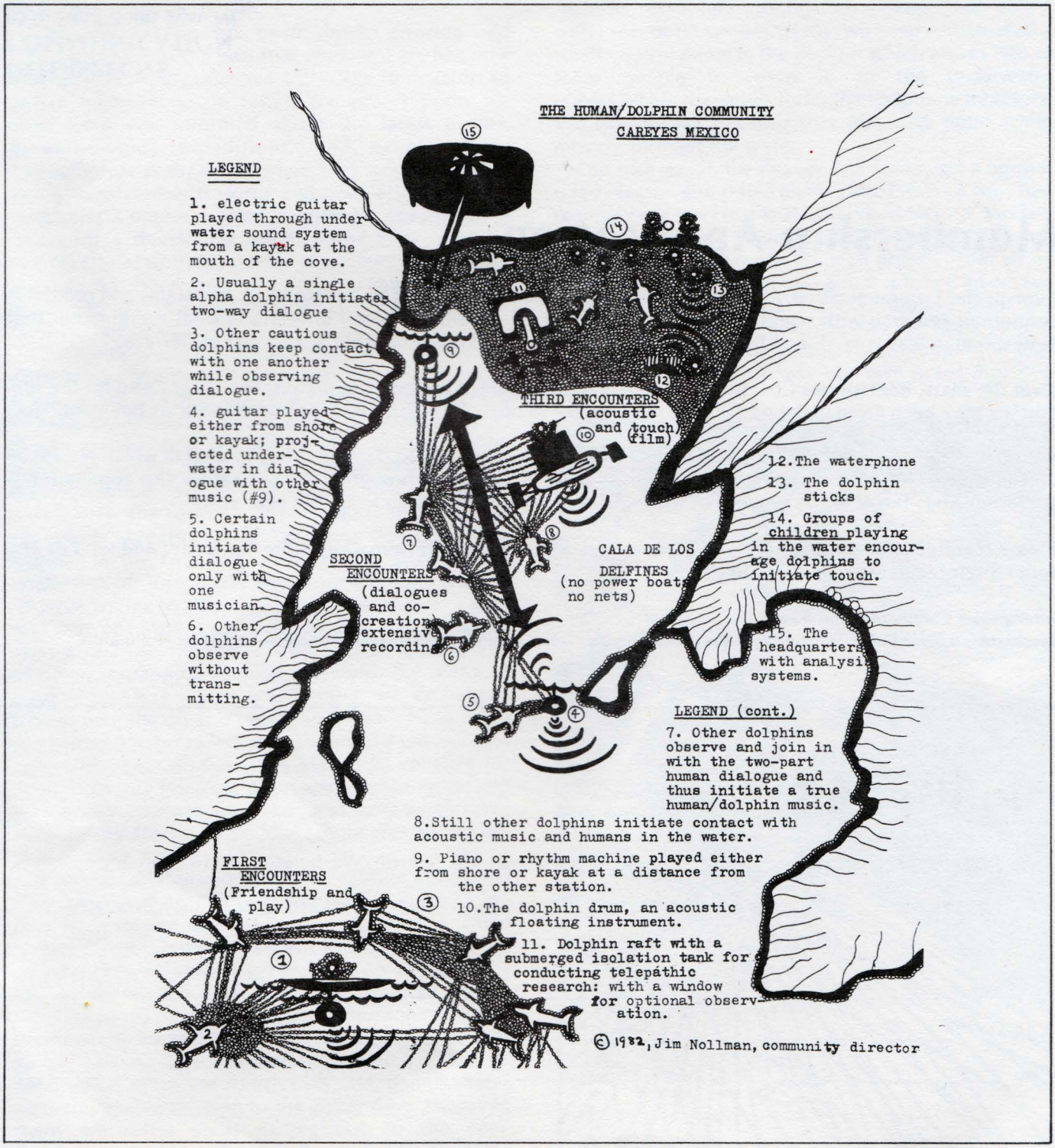
Individuals to write to:

Stephen Rogers, *Minister of the Environment, British Columbia Provencial Government, Victoria, B.C., Canada V8V1X4*

Pierre DeBane, *Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, 240 Sparks Street, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A0E6*

Angus Matthews, *Sealand, 1327 Beach Drive, Victoria, B.C., Canada V8F2NY*

Pat Burton, *Fisheries & Oceans Communication Branch, 240 Sparks Street, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A0E6.*


THE HUMAN/DOLPHIN COMMUNITY
CAREYES MEXICO
LEGEND
1. electric guitar played through underwater sound system from a kayak at the mouth of the cove.
2. Usually a single alpha dolphin initiates two-way dialogue
3. Other cautious dolphins keep contact with one another while observing dialogue.
4. guitar played either from shore or kayak; projected underwater in dialogue with other music (#9).
5. Certain dolphins initiate dialogue only with one musician.
6. Other dolphins observe without transmitting.
THIRD ENCOUNTERS (acoustic and touch) (film)
SECOND ENCOUNTERS (dialogues and co-creation, extensive recording)
CALA DE LOS DELFINES (no power boat, no nets)
FIRST ENCOUNTERS (Friendship and play)
12. The waterphone
13. The dolphin sticks
14. Groups of children playing in the water encourage dolphins to initiate touch.
15. The headquarters with analysis systems.
LEGEND (cont.)
7. Other dolphins observe and join in with the two-part human dialogue and thus initiate a true human/dolphin music.
8. Still other dolphins initiate contact with acoustic music and humans in the water.
9. Piano or rhythm machine played either from shore or kayak at a distance from the other station.
10. The dolphin drum, an acoustic floating instrument.
11. Dolphin raft with a submerged isolation tank for conducting telepathic research: with a window for optional observation.
© 1982, Jim Nollman, community director